

UPSB v2

Around versus Spin

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The terms 'Around' and 'Spin' are often found in the names of pen tricks, and they can be quite confusing. In particular, the ThumbAround and the ThumbSpin are two of the most confusing tricks for beginners (in terms of naming). This article attempts to explain the difference between these two terms, and how to utilize them in the correct and appropriate fashion.

AROUND tricks

The word 'Around' means that the pen should spin **around** either a particular finger, a set of fingers, or any other part of the hand. For more information, see [Types of Spin \(Around Spin\)](#). The name that comes in front of the word "Around" determines the particular area of the hand in which the pen is going to spin around.

Usage:

[*modifier*] **partAround** [(*finger*)] [*Normal* | *Reverse*]

- *modifier* = usually denotes a major variation of the trick (not including finger variations). An example for the modifier in-use would be the Fingerless ThumbAround, with "Fingerless" being the modifier.
- *part* = either a particular finger, a set of fingers, or any other part of the hand that the pen spins around (eg: ThumbAround, IndexAround, or BackAround).
- (*finger*) = specifies which finger pushes the pen (eg: ThumbAround (2) Normal indicates the middle finger is pushing the pen, ThumbAround (1) Normal indicates the index finger is pushing the pen).
- *Normal* = specifies the direction of the trick. The Normal is the default direction, and its usage is optional. In the case of the ThumbAround, the Normal direction indicates a counter-clockwise direction. The default direction varies from trick to trick.
- *Reverse* = specifies the direction of the trick. The Reverse is the direction opposite to a Normal. A trick that contains a spin direction opposite to the default direction must contain the word 'Reverse'. In short, the word 'Reverse' cannot be omitted from the name.

[] indicates an optional item

| indicates either or. Only one of the items is used

Examples of correct trick naming:

Here are a few examples of unusual tricks that are harder to define:

- ThumbAround (T) = Another way to describe the Fingerless ThumbAround. We do recommend the use of the word 'Fingerless' as it is easier and more commonly used.
- IndexMiddleAround = The pen starts between the middle and the ring finger (23) and travels around the index and the middle finger.
- IndexAround (23-12) = A variation of the IndexAround which starts between the middle and the ring finger, jumps over the middle finger and travels around the index as normal.

Examples of incorrect trick naming:

Here are some examples of mistakes that may potentially occur while naming tricks

- Double ThumbAround = If more than one push is needed, then the entire move is called 'Combo', and not a 'Trick'. Double ThumbAround and other similar tricks (eg: Double IndexAround) are actually combos, as they require a fingerless 'force' to initiate the second rotation.

SPIN tricks

The word 'Spin' means that the pen should spin on top of either a particular finger, a set of fingers, or any other part of the hand. For more info, see [Types of Spin \(Top Spin\)](#). The name that comes in front of the word is what determines the area in which the pen is going to spin on.

Usage:

[*modifier*] [*n*] **partSpin** [(*finger*)] [*Normal* | *Reverse*]

- *modifier* = usually denotes a major variation of the trick (not including finger variations). No examples of a modifier associating with a Top Spin trick can be found at this time.
- *n* = denotes the number of rotations for the trick. Arabic-Numerical notation should be used in the case that *n* is not an integer (eg: 1.5 ThumbSpin Normal). Multiple notation should be used in the case that *n* is an integer (eg: Double ThumbSpin Normal). *n* is a positive number regardless of the direction of the spin. The English word 'Multiple' can be substituted for the number *n* in the case that the number of rotations of the trick is greater than 1 and with the exact number of rotations not specified.
- *part* = a particular finger, a set of fingers, or any other part of the hand that the pen spins on top (eg: ThumbSpin, PalmSpin, etc).
- (*finger*) = specifies which finger pushes the pen (eg: 1.5 ThumbSpin (2) Normal indicates that the middle finger is pushing the pen, whereas 1.5 ThumbSpin (1) Normal (also known as 'Forward 1.5') indicates that the index finger is pushing the pen).
- *Normal* = specifies the direction of the trick. The Normal is the default direction, and its usage is optional. In the case of the ThumbSpin, the Normal direction indicates a counter-clockwise direction. The default direction varies from trick to trick.
- *Reverse* = specifies the direction of the trick. The Reverse is the direction opposite to a Normal. A trick that contains a spin direction opposite to the default direction must contain the word 'Reverse'. In short, the word 'Reverse' cannot be omitted from the name.

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The ThumbAround vs. ThumbSpin problem

So, if one reads the above two sections, the difference should be fairly obvious. But why are these two tricks so often confused?

1. Generally speaking, the ThumbAround and ThumbSpin (especially Multiple ThumbSpins) start and end in the identical hand position.
2. Most beginners are not aware of the ThumbSpin; and since, in the ThumbAround, the Thumb is involved they spin the pen, they often jump to the conclusion that the trick is called ThumbSpin.
3. Both tricks look similar, even though the types of spin are different
4. The ThumbAround is a prerequisite for Multiple ThumbSpins

Conclusion

A few of the properties of the two types of tricks (Around and Spin) are connected and intertwined; however, let there be no mistake, the distinction between the two types is clear. The authors at the Universal Pen Spinning Board (UPSB) hope readers who have completed reading this article thereafter will develop the ability to distinguish when to use the word 'Around', and when to use the word 'Spin'.

Pen Spinning Naming Committee

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